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THE Modern Language Journal

Volume I

APRIL, 1917

No. 7

IN DEFENSE OF TRANSLATION

Nothing succeeds like success, and the direct method, which not so long ago was still clamoring for a place in the sun, is now rapidly getting to the point where it will decide who else is to be in the sun, if anyone. This success has been remarkable and surely bears eloquent witness to the soundness of the principle which underlies the attempted reform of our modern language teaching.

There is, however, an element of danger in so rapid an advance. Our direct-method enthusiasts must naturally feel that they have received a popular mandate to pursue their reform to its fullest consummation; and they would be more than human if, in the flush of victory, they were not tempted to take every advantage which their present favorable position affords. But power involves responsibility; and moreover, an excessive use of such power would undoubtedly in the end prove detrimental to the best interests of the direct method itself. We should be too conscious of the diversity of human nature to wish to put all teaching into any uniform; and it cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the character and peculiar aptitudes of the individual teacher must be the principal determining factor in any choice of teaching methods.

Speaking in a strictly practical sense, it may be said that if we express the amounts of time devoted respectively to oral work and translation by a ratio as $\frac{x}{y}$, then we approach the ideal, of pure, direct method as y approaches zero. Thus for many a teacher the problem of the direct method means in practice the problem of translation. It is then significant that so far most formulations of the fundamentals of the direct method have called for a reduction of translation, but not its total abolition, thus not only admitting a certain survival value in the exercise, but also allowing the teacher some latitude of choice.

Nevertheless, it appears that the very idea of the direct method is hostile to the survival of translation, and there can be no doubt that we shall soon hear many voices calling not merely, as now, for "reduction of translation to a minimum," but for the total abandonment of every form of translation in the class-room. I am frank to say that such abandonment seems to me not only impossible—I use the term advisedly—but undesirable; and I wish to point out, as concisely as may be, some merits of translation not shared by any other pedagogical device, or at least not in any comparable measure.

In the first place, translation is our supreme *disciplinary* exercise. It is both exact and exacting, and one might call it the mathematics of language study. Without pushing the figure too hard, one might say that the task of translating any given bit of writing represents a problem to which there is but one perfect—or at any rate, ideal—solution. It must be obvious that there can be no more salutary disciplinary exercise than the requirement to find the solution: for the difficulty of the task naturally stimulates the ambitious student and the sluggard alike, though not for the same reason.

I have been conducting a class of beginners this year, with whom I do a good deal of oral work. They write German answers to German questions very well, some of them faultlessly, but I can count on the fingers of one hand those who make anything like perfect records in translating English sentences into German. The comment of the "reformers" is: you see, your translation is unnatural, or your students would not have so much difficulty with it. To this I would reply: it has always been borne in upon me that the learning of a foreign tongue, especially German, is an arduous affair, and I distrust *a priori* the discipline of any task which half of an average class can do without considerable error.

In the second place, translation is our supreme *cultural* or *aesthetic* exercise. If by our education we aim at something more than the storing of the mind with useful knowledge; if we also desire to develop the highest mental powers and capabilities of our students; then surely translation may claim an honorable place in our curriculum. For it demands, even from the very first, much more than the mere mechanical assembling of memory-data which bulks so large in our elementary teaching: it requires

judgment, taste, and skill, rapidity of thought, and the most intense concentration of the attention. Indeed, I know few tasks that demand more sheer brains of the student than, for example, the rapid, idiomatic, oral translation of a typical passage from Wilhelm Tell. The student who does it at all has acquired something that he can never wholly lose again; the student who does it well has begun to achieve the aesthetic sense.

Third, translation is almost the only *literary* exercise open to an elementary class. I hear someone say: our business is to teach the languages, not to do literary exercises. But surely we do not wish to restrict ourselves more than is needful; or, to put it another way, should we reject anything that makes our work richer and fuller? After all, if we learn languages, it is not merely because they are useful things to know, and may perhaps increase our earning power, but largely because they open the way to great literatures, in which men of other nations have given expression to great thoughts and high aspirations that have moulded the plastic intellects of the world. It has been suggested that the ultimate reason for the failure of the so-called universal languages, such as Volapük and Esperanto, is that there is no pure literature to which they give access. If then we do not wish to slight the literary aspects of our reading, translation should not be lightly banished from the class-room. To mention only one aspect of the matter, a highly important characteristic of literature is the quality called style; how can we better lead the student to an appreciation of such values in a foreign language than in connection with his efforts to translate? The same applies to poetry. We have not infrequently been invited to shudder at the horror of translating a lyric poem in class: yet it is my firm conviction that nothing will so impress its beauty on a pupil's not very observant mind as his own desperate attempts to preserve its elusive quality in an English rendering. On the other hand, is it well to treat all our reading—Immensee, Hermann und Dorothea, Wilhelm Tell—simply as a *story*, a plot, a series of incidents to be reproduced in the student's halting German? Surely Storm and Goethe and Schiller have deserved something better even of the teacher in the high school.

Fourth, translation is the principal contribution we can make to the student's knowledge and command of English. I hear the

same voice say: we are teaching German, let the English teacher look to his own. Yet not so readily may we shake off the responsibilities that unalterable conditions lay upon us. More and more, as we can daily see, the ancient languages are slipping, slipping from the high school curriculum. Whether we desire it or not, some of the cultural burdens which they have borne through many centuries are bound to fall on us, teachers of modern languages; and if we are really humanists at heart, if we are concerned lest the cultural values which language study represents shall be lost to a world drenched in practicality and materialism, shall we not gladly take up the loads that our colleagues were proud to shoulder? The Latin teacher has had to teach English grammar; now we find that we must do it. Must, I say: for we cannot teach German with any effectiveness to a generation that is innocent of the distinction between a participle and an infinitive, a prefix and a preposition, a pronoun and an adjective. It is in translation that such confusion of mind is most promptly and glaringly displayed, and can most readily be corrected; indeed, I would go so far as to say that really good translation is not possible to him who is astray on his grammar. And if in teaching German grammar we inevitably strengthen the student's grasp on his mother tongue, still more, in translating, do we strengthen his English vocabulary. Not only do we force him to make his own many words which would otherwise be remote from his immediate needs, numbers of which will remain to enrich his passive vocabulary, at least; but we help him to clarify his verbal knowledge in both languages. As I said before, translation is exacting and exact: looseness or haziness of thought, in either German or English, will show almost immediately in carefully conducted translation work, and can then be effectively and promptly controlled.

Fifth, translation is the quickest, and frequently the only way of determining the accuracy of a student's preparation. Ardent other-methodists have often disputed this, but it seems to me really beyond dispute. Some of my readers may recall the predicament in which Mark Twain once found himself, when called upon to deliver a fourth of July oration on German: "Sie müssen so freundlich sein, und verzeih mich die interlarding von ein oder zwei Englischer Worte, hie und da, denn ich finde, dass die deutsche

is not a very copious language, and so when you've really got anything to say, you've got to draw on a language that can stand the strain." Now, the American student, in attacking a foreign text, is in much the same situation. If you want to find out what he really knows about a given passage, you must get him to tell you in a language which, for him, can stand the strain. Let me enforce this principle by a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*.

It has been my privilege in the last few years to examine a considerable number of translations from the German. There can be no question, I should say, that almost any of the translators could have passed a perfect oral examination on the work translated: the resources of the question-method could have been exhausted without catching them in error. But a careful comparison of their translations with the original showed beyond the possibility of a doubt that they had actually misunderstood their author, for the English which they used to render him did not mean what he had said. What is true of the professional translator is true in a proportional degree of the student; and one class of students is particularly apt to escape our vigilance if we do nothing but oral work and free composition.

This brings me to my sixth point: the almost inestimable value of translation in dealing with the very difficult problem of the German-American. I think most experienced teachers will agree that it is comparatively easy to teach a youth who knows nothing but is eager to learn; but that there are few tasks more trying than that of attempting to teach a boy who balks because he thinks he knows more than the teacher, but who is really grossly ignorant, or, worse yet, knows a lot that isn't so. Teachers in the Middle West are constantly struggling with German-born pupils of this type. They pronounce easily and well, they have gained at home a certain natural feeling for German sentence order, grammatical gender, and, in rare cases, even for cases and forms; hence oral work is child's play to them. Yet their actual knowledge is often of the most superficial. As one of them once naively said to me, when graded severely for inaccurate translation: "Well, I have a kind of vague idea what it means."

For such pupils there is no more useful or salutary exercise than translation. For one thing, if the teacher is really competent—which is my constant assumption—it offers incomparable oppor-

tunities for showing the pupil at the very outset just how limited and imperfect his knowledge really is. The chastening effect of strictly conducted translation on the cocksure boy whose grandmother came over in the 50's, and who has "a kind of a vague idea what it means," is a perfect godsend to the American-born teacher. But more than that: the systematic, orderly, definite nature of the translation exercise affords the very best opportunity of really teaching the German-American, who finds it difficult to ascertain just how much he does not know; for the necessity of exact thinking which it imposes upon him very soon forms a foundation of assured and definite knowledge upon which a handsome superstructure can be securely erected.

Seventh and last, I address myself to a practical aspect of the question—with some reluctance, for the emphasis on utilitarian considerations in language study too easily obscures the really fundamental aims of our work. But I suppose it is both legitimate and effective to turn an enemy's guns upon himself, and so I make bold to say that from a practical point of view translation need not yield to any other part of our class-room work. Much has been said about the beauty and value of thinking in the foreign language, and for the foreigner who wishes to feel at home in Germany or France, there can be no question that this facility will become a necessity. But I submit that the student of a foreign tongue who expects to spend his days in this country is in a totally different situation. His whole surroundings are English, the majority of his associates speak English, his whole daily life, one might say, is couched in English. So long as he thinks his own original thoughts, he may indeed think in German or French; but many of his thoughts come from the world around him. It must be perfectly evident that those of us who, not native to the foreign tongue, try to use it in our every-day speech, are constantly being forced to find German equivalents for English ideas—and many a knotty problem we encounter in so doing. The translating instinct sets in very early. I am acquainted with a little boy who speaks Dutch with his father, English with his mother. One day his father cut the bread in a different way and called the boy's attention to it, using the word *manier*, which when rapidly pronounced sounds quite like *mynheer*. Turning to his mother, the boy said, "See the new mister daddy has of cutting the bread."

No one had taught the child to translate: it was forced on him by the situation. I contend that drill in translation is surely a thoroughly practical exercise for the American high school or college boy.

It is remote from my purpose, and would unduly expand this article, to discuss the methods of handling translation in the class-room. I cannot refrain, however, from protesting against the assumption that teaching by translation is the refuge of the incompetent—it is as true as the insinuation that many a person sits in a professor's chair because he could earn his salt nowhere else. I do not call it teaching to hold a book and listen to a class recite. I admit that there is a very deplorable amount of bad teaching by the translation method, but if there is relatively more good direct-method teaching—which I will concede—it may be in part due to the fact that such teachers have generally had special training for their work, whereas many of the conservatives had only the training that the actual discipline of the class-room brings with it.

Let me say in conclusion, to prevent any possible misunderstanding, that I am not attacking the so-called direct method, whose value I concede, but merely attempting to show the merits of translation as a pedagogical device, which I find either minimized or denied outright. I am concerned lest the value of translation, the most important aspects of which I have attempted to outline, should be lost sight of in the enthusiasm for the newer teaching methods. In view of the considerations above advanced, I think it is not too much to say that translation is a type of exercise which we can ill afford to banish from the class-room.

BAYARD QUINCY MORGAN.

University of Wisconsin.

ORIGINAL DRAMATIZATION IN MODERN LANGUAGES

In the past few years there has been a great deal of discussion among teachers of modern languages about the introduction of dramatics in the class-room. More and more it has become evident that the use of the spoken word in dialogue form can be made to serve a variety of interest and utilize many of the most important essentials of the students' linguistic equipment.

However, by dramatization in class is usually meant the learning by heart of certain special roles in dialogue form taken from comedies read in class. This work, although a great stimulus to the active representation of the action, is necessarily a mechanical means, since it requires parrot-like memorization of a prescribed text, with so little variation that it becomes monotonous towards the end through its continued repetition, and is generally quickly forgotten as soon as the recitation is over. This criticism is applicable to all sorts of memorization of poems or other matter.

During this past semester, it has been my happy experience in a second-term class to have hit upon a scheme of dramatization that overcomes this latter defect and incorporates all the benefits of dramatization. The results were as amazing as they were instructive. For the benefit of those who are interested in this phase of language instruction, it will give me great pleasure to explain the procedure in all its details.

A simple text is taken up in class, such as for example, the stories in Bierman & Frank's *Conversational Reader*, Allyn & Bacon, 1916, and thoroughly prepared, so that its vocabulary is well known to the student. Preferably, it must be a story that lends itself to easy and facile dialogue with an interesting or humorous plot that will appeal to the student. However, even a sedate poem like "La Cigale et la Fourmi" can be utilized to great advantage. After being thoroughly acquainted with the text, the students are asked to write out their own dramatization of the plot involved, making up their own dialogue with full freedom to amplify or change the plot, or even to combine with other stories previously read. The students must choose their own partners in their little playlet, deciding amongst themselves what part they will portray. They are asked to have their parts ready on a certain

day when each pair of students is given a chance to enact their little scene in class. The parts in general are remarkably well learned and there is a spontaneity and fluency in the work seldom seen in class. The students enter into the spirit and life of their playlet in wonderful fashion. On the whole very few corrections are necessary, and these are given *viva voce* as they go along in their dramatization. They are told, however, to observe these corrections in their text the next time they are called upon. Finally, they hand in a corrected written brief of their individual parts.

I transcribe, herewith, a few short extracts from some of the dramatizations,—which are absolutely original and written at the students' own initiative without any help or correction. They are based on three stories that have been taken from the Bierman & Frank *Conversational Reader*, one being "La Cigale et la Fourmi" and the other two, stories in La Fontaine's life.

LA FONTAINE ET LE VOLEUR

(Adapted from the story by Milton Breslauer, 14 years, and
Matthew Walker, 13 years)

Dramatis Personae

La Fontaine, a great French writer.

Arsène Lupin, a famous thief.

Scène: La chambre à coucher de M. La Fontaine.

La Fontaine, assis sur son lit, et il s'écrie haut—Ah. j'ai une bonne idée, un poème d'une cigale et d'une fourmi. (Il écrit lentement et il lit ce qu'il écrit:

La Cigale, ayant chanté

Tout l'été

Se trouva fort dépourvu

Quand la bise fut venue. . . .

(Entre le voleur dans la rue devant la maison.)

Voleur:—Ah, voilà la maison de M. La Fontaine, un poète fou et paresseux. J'irai le dépouiller de son argent. (Il entend)

La Fontaine: Pas un seul petit morceau de mouche ou de. . .

Voleur: C'est terrible, par exemple! (Il frappe à la porte)

La Fontaine: Ah, je voudrais bien qu'on ne me dérange pas.

(A haute voix)

Qui est là?

Etc., etc.,

Another extract:

Je m'appelle Citrino et je prendrai le rôle de La Fontaine et mon ami prendra le rôle de son domestique et puis du voleur.

(La Fontaine est assis à sa table et il écrit un poème.)

Entre le domestique.

Domestique: Monsieur, que voulez-vous pour votre déjeuner?

Fontaine: Donnez-moi une pomme cuite aujourd'hui; je n'ai pas grand' faim.

D. Oui, monsieur.

F. Maintenant je continuerai mon poème: (il écrit)

D. Voilà votre pomme cuite, monsieur.

F. Laissez-la sur la table. Ne me dérangez plus. Si l'on me cherche, dites que je suis allé à Paris.

D. Oui, monsieur. Bonjour.

Voleur. (dehors) Ce monde est très triste. Je n'ai rien pour manger. Que ferai-je? (il aperçoit l'adresse de La Fontaine) Morbleu, numéro 23 rue Blanche. C'est chez La Fontaine le célèbre poète. Il est très riche. J'irai chez lui.

F. (Ecrivain) Maître corbeau, sur un arbre perché

Tenait dans sa bouche. . . non . . . bec (frappe, frappe)

Morbleu, tout le monde me dérange aujourd'hui. Je n'ouvrira pas la porte. (frappe, frappe) Ventrebleu, je dois ouvrir. Qui est-ce?

Voleur. Je m'appelle le Président de la République Française.

Je suis Monsieur Poincaré.

Etc., etc., etc.

The results of this kind of *original* dramatization have been so novel and remarkable, that I wish to point out some of the most evident benefits derived. There is an intense utilization of the material based on lessons previously studied and incorporated in concrete form, in terms of the students' own vocabulary. The latter becomes part of the students' own linguistic equipment. The expressions are re-directed in terms of the students' own activities and personalities. There is a natural transposition of tenses and word-forms to agree with the students' compositions.

This gathering of material from many lessons tends to the practical use of new forms.

The intellectual and pedagogic stimuli are even more far-reaching. Nothing that I can imagine stirs up a finer and more sustained kind of interest, because that interest is spontaneous and absolutely voluntary. The students sit with open-mouthed wonder and listen with the closest kind of attention to the performance, and this interest is extended beyond the limit of that day's lesson. Both before and after school there is a profound activity on the part of the student in constant asking of questions, in building up their little plot, and in their own private rehearsals among themselves, so that when the final performance takes place, it shall be as perfect as possible. The humor of the situation infuses in the students a thorough enjoyment of the work,—which is the best basis for close attention. It is unasked, but freely given.

The personal initiative infused in the student, even in the most slothful, the desire to improvise something novel, the shame of failure before their youthful audience, forces them to apply themselves diligently and carefully to their tasks. The pride of accomplishment swells their young bosoms with joy and pleasure, and prompts them to utilize their ingenuity to the fullest extent. The acquisition of power, and more than that, its application, makes them self-confident and energetic.

It is a most admirable means of aiding in the memorization of important idioms and expressions with the added advantage that the vocabulary thus learned becomes a permanent possession of the student. Probably the most interesting feature of this work is the diligence with which students search through the book and turn to new lessons or those previously had, for new expressions or sayings. Thus colloquial and everyday expressions, like "*Ça va bien?*" "*Comment vous portez vous?*" "*Il fait beau temps,*" etc., are learned without effort and used spontaneously.

The constant need of modifying their expressions to suit their own language brings out the finest practice in transposition, tense forms, and syntax. The unconscious use of the subjunctive after such expressions as, "*je veux*" and "*il faut*" is of constant occurrence. The aid to pronunciation, the carefulness of diction and of enunciation cannot be too greatly emphasized, because in

no part of the language work has the student such an opportunity of monopolizing the spoken word. It is a most admirable means for original conversation. The give-and-take dialogues with their quick and vivacious questions and answers are replete with idiomatic expressions, forming the best basis for inculcating in the student fluency and rapidity in the foreign language.

Finally, it is a most pleasant change from the ordinary classroom drudgery and the dry-as-dust grammatical drill so common in many class-rooms. The task of correcting this work, both oral and written, is as pleasurable to the teacher as it is beneficial to the student.

HENRY BIERMAN.

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WRITTEN HOME WORK IN FIRST YEAR GERMAN

Little by little modern language teachers are getting away from the idea that home written work is for the purpose of learning a new vocabulary or new grammatical principles. To be sure, the digging out of new principles and the looking up of new words is an excellent mental discipline, and if discipline is the sole end of modern language teaching, then by all means we should pursue this method of giving the pupil such a home task that, by dint of two or three hours "plugging" and by using all the mother-wit which nature has bestowed upon him, he can produce an exercise half-perfect. Under this method, the perfection of the product is not the end in view, it is a question of how much work he puts upon it. The student was laboring (literally) under this impression who came to me and complained that, although she put two to three hours on her preparation (whereas her classmates put one), nevertheless she got the lowest grade in the class. We are beginning to realize that the final test is whether the pupil knows thoroughly as much as can be expected, and not how much work he puts upon it. If he has attained this end, then the mental discipline, character building, and the development of patience and ingenuity will have come of themselves.

It is one of the truest of truisms that it is much easier work for the teacher to put the right idea, word, or grammatical principle into the student's head than to take a wrong one out and replace it by the right one. I often wonder if other German teachers have found that it is in general more difficult to teach German grammar to a student of German-American parentage than one to of Anglo-Saxon, due, no doubt, to the fact that there are so many wrong ideas to be removed. However, this will also be true of the Anglo-Saxon student, if we let him study out these principles for himself. He will in a majority of cases get the wrong idea, and then the teacher will have a double task, that of getting the wrong idea out and that of putting the right one in. Therefore, every bit of written work assigned for homework should be very carefully and minutely gone over in class the day before. Thus the written work becomes an excellent means for reinforcing and impressing what has been learned in class, and makes for thoroughness.

What should be the character of the homework? We often err in giving infrequent and difficult exercises, rather than simple and often very similar or even the same exercises frequently, for one thing learned thoroughly is better than a half dozen learned half-way. Such exercises as filling in blank spaces for endings, etc., are excellent exercises for home written work, in spite of the objection urged against them that a majority of the work is mere copying, for this mere copying is one of the things which impresses the feeling for proper order, tense and person forms, in other words "Sprachgefühl" upon the student's mind. Certainly the pedagogical logic, or the logical pedagogy of having students change whole sentences from one tense to the other or from singular to plural and vice versa cannot be denied, for it exercises in a practical way the fact that we speak in sentences and not in paradigms.

So much has been said by the advocates of the direct method against the use of English-German sentences that it is with fear and trepidation that I advocate this form of written work, and still maintain that I use the direct method. The objections generally urged against the use of English-German sentences are that they are disconnected, are also often impractical and silly, being sentences that none would ever have need to use, and violate flagrantly the wish of some direct "methodists" of keeping English as far away from the class-room as possible. These objections are all quite valid, with the exception that some of our more recent grammars are inventing sentences which deal with practical everyday matters, are simple, are centered around similar topics, and deal with only one, or at most two new grammatical principles. If we admit the validity of the objections against the English to German sentences, then the question is, do the advantages of their use outweigh the disadvantages? My experience seems to prove to me that they do.

What are the advantages of using English to German sentences in the first year? It coincides with the psychological principle of leading from the known to the unknown. Our grammars all begin with very simple sentences, all of which may be translated literally from one language to the other. This affords us an opportunity of using the similarity between the two languages, the cognates, etc. We can use the law of association of ideas

to the fullest degree, attaching the new words learned in class to the English cognates. As the work progresses we get farther away from the literal translation into the idiomatic, and here we can use the law of contrast to impress the words and principles upon the student's mind.

English to German sentences should never be used to teach entirely new words or principles, but there is nothing better to reinforce those learned in class than these very English to German exercises. Therefore they should come at the end of two or three days drill on the new vocabulary and the new grammatical principles. Furthermore, before being assigned as homework, these sentences should be studied orally in class, accompanied by questions from the teacher on the grammatical principles involved. This homework should then be carefully corrected by the teacher and the different kinds of mistakes indicated differently so that the student can know exactly what his error is. Another good method of accomplishing this result is to study the sentences orally to-day in class, make a translation at home, and to-morrow, putting this home translation aside, retranslate from these English sentences written on the board, while the teacher goes from seat to seat and corrects the sentences as they are written, explaining to the student his mistake. In this way accuracy and thoroughness is obtained and the student has the chance to profit by his error.

We sometimes fail to realize the importance of written work in our language teaching. Whatever our ultimate purpose is—to teach to read or to speak—written work is one of our most efficient means to attain our end, and we should use it very frequently, remembering, however, that it is a reinforcing agent and not a means of beginning to teach or learn.

EDW. B. MERSEREAU.

Wayland Academy, Beaver Dam, Wis.

**REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS
AND INVESTIGATIONS APPOINTED BY
THE ASSOCIATION OF MODERN
LANGUAGE TEACHERS OF
THE MIDDLE STATES
AND MARYLAND**

The following is the complete report of the above Association's Committee appointed in 1913, consisting of W. A. Hervey (Chairman), Columbia University; Isabelle Bronk, Swarthmore College, Frederick S. Hemry, Tome Institute; Carl A. Krause, Jamaica High School; L. A. Roux, Newark Academy.

Parts I and III dealing with the Questionnaire sent out by the Committee were presented at the annual meeting held in November, 1915; Part II was read by the Chairman at the meeting held in November, 1916, at Baltimore.

REPORT OF 1915

In accordance with instructions received at the last annual meeting, and with due consideration of the discussion of the report submitted at that time (for summary of report and discussion, see *Proceedings*, 1914, pp. 5-16), the Committee formulated a revised plan for an Aural and Oral Test for admission to college in French, German and Spanish. This plan has been submitted for criticism to about one thousand public and private secondary schools in the Middle States and Maryland, including all that are members of the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools. Through the courtesy of the principal a letter was sent to about fifteen hundred modern language teachers in these schools, reviewing the work of the Committee from the beginning in 1913, setting forth the present plan, and calling attention to the endorsement given by the colleges of the Middle States and Maryland to the recommendation of the Association of Modern Language Teachers that Aural and Oral Tests for admission to college be established. The letter was accompanied by (1) a copy of the *Proceedings* for 1914, (2) printed specimen examination papers in Elementary and Intermediate French and German, to show how the plan could be put into operation, and (3) a detailed question-

naire requesting (i) the opinion of the teachers as to the establishment of the proposed test and their criticism of the plan and the specimen papers submitted; (ii) information as to their present methods of instruction as related to the preparation of pupils for such tests; (iii) information as to the preparation and experience of modern language teachers and suggestions for the improvement of prevailing methods of their training.* A similar letter, with specimen examination papers, was sent to the members of Modern Language Departments in the colleges, normal schools and universities of the Middle States and Maryland. This letter urged that action be taken by the respective faculties establishing a suitable Aural and Oral Test for admission, such as had already been taken by the faculty of Columbia College, and that an effort be made to have such a requirement in force by September, 1917.

The plan submitted by the Committee and illustrated by the accompanying specimen papers, recommended that the colleges establish an Elementary Aural and Oral Test in French, German and Spanish, to be designated French, German or Spanish (*x*), supplementary to the present examination, which is designated (*a*); and an Intermediate Aural and Oral Test in French and German, to be designated French or German (*y*), supplementary to the present examination, which is designated (*b*); the candidates in (*x*) and (*y*) to be examined in groups of not more than seventy-five, in order that the examiner may be heard without difficulty.

The Elementary Test (*x*) to consist of three parts:

1. A ten-minute exercise in writing easy French, German or Spanish prose from dictation.
2. Written reproduction, in English, of the content of a short passage in easy French, German or Spanish prose, to be read by the examiner (15 minutes).
3. Written answers, in the respective foreign language, to easy questions read by the examiner in the foreign language, the questions to be of two types: (*a*) On general topics, such as would be used in the elementary practice of the schoolroom. (*b*) On a connected prose passage, to be read by the candidates

*Copies of the specimen paper in French, prepared by Mr. Roux, and in German, prepared by Prof. Bagster-Collins, and of the questionnaire, can be had on application to W. A. Hervey, Columbia University.

(and returned) just before the questions are asked. (35 minutes.)

The Intermediate Test (*y*) likewise to consist of three parts:

1. A ten-minute exercise in writing moderately difficult French or German from dictation.
2. Written reproduction, in the respective foreign language, of the content of a short passage in prose read by the examiner. (30 minutes).
3. Written answers, in the respective foreign language, to questions read by the examiner in the foreign language: (a) On general topics, chosen from a list to be announced beforehand. (b) On a connected prose passage, to be read by the examiner just before the questions are asked (30 minutes).

It will be noted that no actual *oral* test is included in this examination, but it seems certain that no candidate could pass it who had not received abundant oral, as well as aural, training. In the earlier plan it was proposed to have, instead of Part III, an individual test in pronunciation and "speaking", to be administered by the college to which the candidate might later seek admission. The discussion last year brought out serious objections to the postponement of this test in the case of candidates taking the examinations of the College Entrance Examination Board or the New York State Education Department. The letter pointed out that colleges conducting their own examinations can readily substitute for Part III such an individual test, or in other cases require a supplementary test in pronunciation if they find it expedient. Colleges admitting on certificate will of course adapt the aural and oral requirement to this procedure. It would seem that Parts I and II could be covered by the certification of accredited schools, particularly if properly corrected and endorsed exercises in dictation and reproduction were submitted, as is done with laboratory note-books. The necessity for a somewhat lenient administration of an aural and oral requirement in the beginning was emphasized, as was the obligation that would rest upon the colleges to make their own elementary instruction conform to the new program and, in so far as they undertake the training of teachers to fit recruits for the staff of the secondary school under the new standard.

In the matter of credit, it is recommended that no increase or division of the present unit-allowance be made. The Aural and

Oral Test should, however, be made a separate part of the respective subject, so that it will be possible to condition a candidate in that part only, as is now done in the divisions of Elementary Latin. That is, Elementary French should include French *a* and French *x*, and should count two units, as now; Intermediate French should include French *b* and French *y*, and should count one unit. It does not seem necessary to extend the new requirement to Advanced French and German, counting a fourth unit, provided the Intermediate requirement is prerequisite. It should be noted that the proposed *x* and *y* examinations will necessarily test the candidate's ability to write the foreign language and that accordingly the composition of the *a* and *b* examinations will naturally be reduced.

The inquiry addressed to the secondary teachers was wholly impersonal, neither their names nor the location of their schools being given in the replies. These have been classified, more or less approximately, by states, New York City alone being reported separately. The Committee is greatly indebted to the secondary teachers for the accurate and suggestive information furnished. Considering the labor involved in examining the material and filling out the lengthy questionnaire we are well satisfied with the result; namely, replies from 260 teachers in 206 schools. (Some twenty replies were received too late for inclusion in this report.) The number of votes was 292, some of the teachers representing more than one of the three languages. The distribution of schools among the several states, and particularly among the communities of different size within these states, indicates that the expression of opinion is thoroughly representative. The total secondary school attendance in the Middle States and Maryland represented in 168 of the 206 schools from which replies were received (the figures for 38 schools missing) is 115,698; the pupils immediately affected (in French, German and Spanish) number 54,746. With allowance for the 38 additional schools, it is probable that the replies received represent at least three-fourths of the total secondary school attendance in this territory. Table I indicates the number of schools, the total enrollment, and the attendance in French, German and Spanish, as given for the 168 schools (of the total 206) which furnished information on this point.

TABLE I

ENROLLMENT IN 168 SCHOOLS (OF 206; NOT REPORTED IN 38)

	Total Number Reported		FRENCH		GERMAN		SPANISH		Total No. Pupils in		
	Sch'ls	Pupils	Sch'ls	Pupils	Sch'ls	Pupils	Sch'ls	Pupils	Fr.	Gr.	Sp
N. Y. City	27	52,933	12	3,835	21	24,984	4	1248	30,067		
N. Y. State	71	20,174	20	1,481	63	4,630	4	34	6,145		
N. J.	36	25,843	13	1,998	30	7,685	1	13	9,696		
Pa.	23	13,838	9	1,251	21	5,876	3	205	7,332		
Md.	8	2,743	4	569	8	815	2	7	1,391		
Del. & D. C.	3	167	1	70	3	45	—	—	115		
	168	115,698	59	9,204	146	44,035	14	1,507	54,746		

The essential portions of the questions in Part I follow. The distribution of answers among men and women and among teachers of French, German and Spanish, is shown in Table II. The vote on Questions 1 and 2 is given in Table III. The answers to Question 4 have been given in Table I. The more important opinions and suggestions elicited by Questions 2 and 3 will be treated below.

QUESTIONNAIRE—PART I—THE PROPOSED AURAL AND ORAL TEST

1. Do you think that the college entrance examination should include, as outlined in the accompanying letter and specimen papers (a) an Elementary Aural and Oral Test in French, German, Spanish? (b) an Intermediate Aural and Oral Test in French and German? Why, or why not?

2. Can your pupils, in your judgment, be satisfactorily prepared for such tests? If not, what particular difficulties make it impossible?

3. What modifications of the proposed form of Aural and Oral Test do you suggest?

4. How many high school pupils attend your school this year? How many pupils take French? German? Spanish?

TABLE II—DISTRIBUTION OF ANSWERS TO QUESTIONNAIRE—PART I

Answers—	Teachers	Votes
From men teaching French only	14	
“ women “ “ “	34	
	—	48
“ men “ German “	52	48
“ women “ “ “	124	
	—	176
“ men “ Spanish “	5	176
“ women “ “ “	2	
	—	7
“ men “ two (of F., G., S.)	12	7
“ women “ “ “	14	
	—	26
“ men “ three (F., G., S.)	1	52
“ women “ “ “	2	
	—	3
		9
		—
		260
		202

TABLE III—SUMMARY OF VOTES—PART I

Question 1—		N.Y.C.	N.Y.S.	N.J.	Pa.	Md.	Del.&D.C.	Total
No. of teachers	...	53	95	57	38	13	4	260
El. French	Yes	13	18	17	13	5	1	67
	No	1	5	3	1	1	1	11—78
Int. "	Yes	13	17	20	12	5	1	68
	No	1	6	..	2	1	..	10—78
El. German	Yes	35	74	39	27	10	3	188
	No	1	6	1	1	1	..	10—198
Int. "	Yes	36	71	39	23	8	3	180
	No	..	9	1	5	3	..	18—198
Spanish	Yes	6	4	1	2	2	..	15
	No	..	..	..	1	..	..	1—16
Question 2—								
French	Yes	13	20	20	13	6	1	73
	No	1	3	..	1	..	..	5—78
German	Yes	36	75	37	27	11	3	189
	No	..	5	3	1	..	..	9—198
Spanish	Yes	6	4	1	2	2	..	15
	No	..	..	..	1	..	..	1—16

The questions in Part III were designed to ascertain the teacher's preparation and experience in the following respects: (1) Whether teaching in a public or a private school, and in towns of what size. (2) Number of years' experience. (3) Birthplace, country; if foreign-born, age at coming to the United States. (4) Birthplace of parents. (5) General education, certificates and degrees received. (6) Special study of the foreign language in this country or abroad. (7) Satisfactory opportunity in secondary, collegiate, normal or university training for (a) practice in oral reading and pronunciation; (b) hearing the foreign language spoken; (c) practice in speaking the foreign language; (d) study of phonetics; (e) special study of the history and geography of the respective foreign country; (f) study of methods of teaching the foreign language to secondary pupils; (g) practice teaching, with criticism. (8) The teacher's own estimate of his ability to pronounce (in reading), understand and speak the foreign language.

Answers.—Of the 260 teachers (84 men, 176 women), all left one or more of the foregoing questions unanswered, hence the varying totals in the following summary: (1) Of 245, 220 teach in public schools, 20 in private schools. Of 248, 53 teach in New York City, 58 in towns of more than 50,000 population, 19 in towns of more than 25,000, 20 in towns of more than 10,000, 31 in towns of more than 5,000, 67 in towns of less than 5,000. (2) Of 243, 78 have taught less than five years, 95 five to ten years, 70 more than ten years. (3) Of 248, 206 were born in the United States, Canada, or England; 42 in France, Germany, or Switzerland, 12 of these having come to the United States when under 14 years of age, 13 when over 14. Of the 206 born in the United States, 10 had one foreign-born parent, 24 both. (5 and 6) Of 248, 214 have had formal study in this country beyond the secondary school; of the remainder, some (foreign-born) had all their training abroad, a few have had high school training only. Of the 214, 82 had college residence only, 17 normal school only, 115 have had graduate residence. The total number reported as holding a certificate or degree is 189, as follows: Bachelor's degree 170, normal diploma 10, special diploma 9. Of the first group, 54 also have the A.M. degree, 6 the Ph.D. Most of those who studied in college and all who have had graduate study specialized in the foreign language or languages which they are teaching. One

hundred and six have studied abroad for longer or shorter periods—35 in France, 67 in Germany, 4 in Spain. (7) Of 245, 127 had opportunity at some stage of their training for satisfactory practice in oral reading and pronunciation, 177 for hearing the foreign language spoken, practically none (except those who are of foreign parentage or have studied abroad) for practice in speaking. Fifty-one had instruction in phonetics, 3 in the history and geography of the foreign country, 55 in methods; 18 had practice teaching in their preparatory course. (8) Of 230, including 42 foreign-born and 24 with two foreign-born parents, 89 rate their ability to pronounce as excellent, 113 as good, 26 as fair, 2 as poor; 86 rate their ability to understand as excellent, 94 as good, 48 as fair, 2 as poor; 39 rate their ability to speak as excellent, 80 as good, 101 as fair, 10 as poor. Of 95 teachers in New York State, 63 are certified by the State Department of Education as qualified to give oral instruction.

The opinions expressed in answer to Questions 2 and 3 of Part I are in most instances favorable to the proposed examination and to the method indicated by the committee's recommendation and the specimen papers. Among the arguments advanced are the following: Such a requirement will be a spur to teachers and pupils alike, and is the only means to affect a needed improvement in secondary instruction. It is the only fair test of the direct method, which is so much advocated and so little recognized. The schools now doing such work get no credit for it and have to overcome opposition, because it is held to be a useless fad, as proved by the fact that the colleges do not require it. Aural and oral training would insure a real "working vocabulary" and ready use of it; would likewise improve the written work. Apart from the training in the foreign language, this work will afford opportunity for the practice of ear and tongue in general and would be a great aid to the cultivation of accuracy in English reading and pronunciation.

Objections are based upon various grounds: The test would discriminate against pupils who lack ready speech and learn through their eye. It is not worth while, according to certain experts, who are cited; the results are superficial at best; proficiency in this direction is not demanded by American conditions. The colleges utterly neglect aural and oral practice, and the pupil

will soon lose what he may have acquired in the secondary school. Others believe that such training is good for college candidates, useless for other pupils.

Some think that the examinations should be simplified throughout; others, while they may be hard enough now, they should be made more difficult as soon as practicable. The reproduction in English in the elementary requirement is not to be approved; it would be better to have a simpler passage and to require production in the foreign language. Question 3 (b) in the elementary examination is too difficult. Ability to answer questions will depend upon the candidate's "verbal memory." The aural and oral test, if given at all, should be optional, with extra credit.

Some who favor the plan in principle note difficulties in the way of its successful executing. Such are the excessive demands upon teachers, due to large classes (45 or more) or too many classes (e.g., seven). The reading requirement leaves too little time for oral drill. Even when the use of the direct method is approved, the amount of prescribed reading makes its use impossible. Oral drill should be conducted on a laboratory plan, as in the natural sciences. The incompetence of teachers and the half-yearly change of teachers would be serious handicaps. Examinations such as those proposed would not be fair tests because of pupils' nervousness; they should be examined and rated by the regular teachers. Several fear that a requirement of this kind would discourage the study of modern languages. Pupils who now become interested and learn to like the reading of foreign literature would be "frightened away"; they would prefer Latin, "where there is no danger of such a requirement." Modern languages are hard enough to teach now; "don't add new obstacles." This requirement "would give the colleges a new opportunity to domineer over the secondary schools." It is hard enough as it is to get pupils into college, and many more would be kept out by this additional requirement.

REPORT OF 1916

On behalf of the Committee on Investigation, Professor Hervey reported that the study of material received in answer to Part II of the Questionnaire sent out in October, 1915, had been completed. It was possible last year to report only on parts I and

III, which dealt, respectively with, the Proposed Oral and Aural Test for College Entrance and with the Preparation and Experience of Secondary Teachers of French, German and Spanish (see *Proceedings* for 1915, page 6ff). The answers to Part II, dealing with Methods of Instruction, were often stereotyped, but contained some interesting suggestions. Since these are incorporated in an article on "Oral Practice," to appear in the December number of THE MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL, it is not necessary to present them here. The statistical portion of the report follows with occasional brief comment.

The questions on Methods concerned (A) Reading of Texts and (B) Practice in Hearing, Speaking and Writing. The essential points of query and the number of answers on each are indicated. The maximum number of teachers answering one or more of these questions is 256, of the 260 who returned the Questionnaire.

(A) *Question 1* (a). Reading of the text in the foreign language: Wholly, 154; partly, 101; not at all, 1. (b) Translation into English: Wholly, 62; partly, 188; not at all, 6. A number of teachers, particularly in city schools, emphasized the importance of translation for the teaching of correct English idiom to pupils of foreign birth or parentage.

Question 2. Do you include accuracy of pronunciation in your grading? Yes, 226. No, 30.

3. Do you have practice in sight reading? Yes, 235. No, 21.

(B) *Question 1.* Hearing, *with books closed*, the prepared text read: Text read by teacher only, 66; by fellow-pupils only, 5; by both, 98.

Question 2. Questions on the text, asked and answered in the foreign language: Yes, 253. No, 3.

Question 3. Such questions also on facts of every-day life, 223; with use of objects, pictures, etc., 182; with use of series (Gouin) method, 61.

Question 4. Colloquial phrases and idioms memorized: Yes, 243. No, 13. For testing their use, many teachers recommend the writing and translation into English of original sentences.

Question 5. Poems memorized: Yes, 246. No, 10. Tests: 73 by declamation only; 16 by free oral reproduction, 33 by written (free and literal), 124 by both. About twenty teachers have poems sung, singly or in concert. Some teachers, while

believing that poems afford good practice in pronunciation and enunciation, prefer to substitute, in part at least, the memorization of prose passages, as giving better drill in colloquial idiom; likewise free paraphrase of poems rather than declamation.

Question 6. Paraphrase in class of short stories or poems read or spoken by the teacher: Yes, 175. No, 17. In first year 56 have the paraphrase written in English, 58 in the foreign language, 43 in both. Second year, 3 in English, 133 in foreign language, 36 in both. Third year, 1 in English, 145 in foreign language, 10 in both.

Question 7. Foreign language used by teacher for giving ordinary directions in class: 201 use foreign language, 31 English, 16 both. In grammatical instruction, 119 use English only, 30 the foreign language only, 104 use both (of these some use English first year, the foreign language later).

Question 8. Aids in teaching: 92 use wall-maps; 42, pictures; 15, phonetic charts; 2, newspapers; 2, map-drawing; 24, various.

Question 9. Material for composition: 235 use translation of English sentences; 215, incomplete foreign language sentences in which inflectional endings, prepositions, etc., are to be supplied; 173, paraphrase of a foreign language passage by means of printed or dictated questions covering its contents; 213 use free composition, mostly in third year.

Question 10. Dictation exercises: Yes, 234. No, 22. The majority of teachers have pupils correct by use of blackboard, but about sixty do all the correcting themselves, many of these marking the individual exercises at home.

Question 11. As other means for practice in hearing and speaking the foreign language: 12 use the phonograph; 87 have foreign language clubs, 51 theatricals, 15 song practice; 5 give magic lantern talks, 2 use games in class instruction. One teacher has one or more pupils daily tell a three-minute story, selected from material provided for this purpose; another has reports on current news items or advertisements from a foreign language newspaper, jokes from a humorous magazine, etc.

A large number of the secondary teachers who returned the questionnaire took great pains to make a real contribution, in one way or another, to the Committee's inquiry and we take occasion to express again our sense of indebtedness for this aid,

without which, indeed, our whole labor would have been in vain.

The Committee believe that the results of the investigation now concluded make it clear that this Association should urge upon the colleges more strongly than ever the necessity of establishing oral and aural tests for admission. A new letter of inquiry has lately been sent to the colleges in the Middle States and Maryland, to ascertain the steps taken in this direction, and calling attention to the announcement of such tests by Cornell, Hamilton, Princeton and Columbia, beginning 1917 or 1918. It is of the utmost importance that the College Entrance Examination Board administer such tests, but while that body gives hearty approval to the establishment of such an entrance requirement, the technical difficulties in securing absolute uniformity of tests have hitherto prevented favorable action. Another difficulty seems to be presented to colleges which admit by certificate. The Committee believe that it may be possible to work out a plan whereby laboratory note-books would be accepted from accredited schools in lieu of the aural test, at least. These are some of the problems that remain to be studied.

The foregoing report was accepted, by unanimous vote. The thanks of the Association were expressed to Professor Hervey, who retires as chairman of the committee, but remains a member of it.

REVIEWS

- (A) **A First Year German Grammar** by Philip Schuyler Allen and Paul Hermann Phillipson. Ginn and Co. 1916. xix + 436 pp. \$1.00.
- (B) **A New German Grammar for Beginners** by Paul Valentine Bacon. Allyn & Bacon, 1916. xx, 397 + 92 pp. \$1.00.
- (C) **Practical Beginning German, A Text-Book for Beginning Classes in High Schools and Colleges** by Alfred I. Roehm. George Banta Publishing Company, Menasha, Wis., 1916. 355 pp. \$1.00.
- (D) **Practical German Lessons for Beginners in High Schools and Colleges** by Paul H. Grumann. University Publishing Company, Chicago, and Lincoln, Nebr., 1916. 351 pp. \$1.25.

One of the clearest indications of the chaos existing in the aims, methods, and organization of modern language instruction in America at the present time is the character of the flood of beginners' texts constantly issuing from the presses of the country. The appearance of such a large number of books must, at the same time, be construed as a hopeful sign, for it indicates that many minds are seriously at work on the solution of our difficult problems. Presumably, aside from commercial considerations, the author of a new beginners' text produces his book for one of three reasons; either he believes that he has a new plan of presentation or one better suited to the group of learners addressed; or he believes he has originated a very important new device or set of devices for drill; or he believes that his material has greater intrinsic value than that already in existence. That these three motives may be combined in the mind of a single author goes without saying. In reality, however, we find many authors addressing themselves to two or three quite different sets of conditions at once; or combining two or three different methods of presentation; or imitating weakly what someone else has done for the sake of one or two insignificant improvements. This is unfortunate, for in the last ten years the most conspicuous success in class, if not commercially, has been achieved with beginners' texts that are unified in plan and execution, and that consciously address themselves to one specific age and condition of pupil or student. It is scarcely likely that any one of the four texts under consideration here is destined thus to tower above the common level, although, as is stated in the Preface of one of them, "Time alone will tell."

In the Preface of (A) the statement is made that it is "adaptable to any method of instruction," and while no definite expression is given, the implication seems to be that the book is intended for use in high schools (p. v.). (B) proposes to use a method based upon reading from the very start, and indirectly, by the consistent use of the word *pupil* seems to appeal to high-school classes particularly; no definite statement of aim is made. (C) states

broadly that it is "designed as a text-book in first-year German for high schools and colleges," and that "grammar method and natural method are combined." The author of (D) addresses himself to "beginners in high schools and colleges" and employs a "cumulative method." Each book claims a distinctive treatment that will be taken up in its place. The fact that such broad general lines as the above are most commonly followed does not speak very eloquently either for the state of our instruction or for the courageous, conscious, disinterested leadership of many of our text-book makers.

(A) contains 77 lessons; of these 10 are indicated as reviews, all of them coming before Lesson 51 and unevenly distributed. The ordinary lesson consists of a) reading, b) German questions on the reading, c) English directions for exercises based on the reading, d) English questions to develop the grammar inductively, e) English statement of grammar rules, f) English sentences for re-translation, g) proverbs or a poem for memorizing or additional reading. This arrangement is, in itself, excellent and educationally sound, representing a consistent effort at inductive presentation. The separate vocabularies for each lesson have been dispensed with, the learner being expected to rely on the general vocabularies at the end of the book. An index makes possible the use of the book for reference work. A 4-page Preface is followed by a 9-page introductory treatment of orthography and pronunciation. The latter presents the usual material in the usual form, to which the usual number of objections could be made (as, e.g., to the use of *dock* and *Dick* as the basis for teaching the German *ach* and *ich*-sounds), if it were to be supposed that either teachers or pupils would use this part of a beginning book enough to become confused. It may not be out of place to state here that directions for pronunciation should rest on the physiological basis of articulation or else be omitted entirely. Otherwise such pupils as do use them are liable to acquire wrong habits, very difficult to eradicate.

Of the reading selections, only 19 could, even by liberal interpretation, be said to present material with any connected thought-content. The other 58 consist for the most part of disconnected illustrative sentences, mere declensional or conjugational paradigms, or lists of words. The national element is almost wholly lacking, except for the mention of a few place-names. In three cases, at least, for the sake of a humorous point, characters are presented which certainly are neither typically German nor morally elevating; there can be no excuse for offering pupils such trash. (Lessons 13, 22, 23). It will thus be seen that the authors' conception of what constitutes reading material is very liberal. It is by no means in accord with the advanced stand they have taken in their order of presentation. As far as Lesson 38 reading selections are frequently translated into English in a foot-note. It is hard to see why this is done instead of giving a vocabulary, and still harder to see why it is done for lessons 14 and 15, but not for Lesson 18, for example. There is too great inconsistency apparent between this procedure and the admirable instructions given on p. 79 for approaching a new reading lesson.

The German questions, the exercises, and both the inductive treatment and formal statement of grammar are marked by a simplicity which will make easy the rapid covering of a large amount of drill. Unfortunately, many of

the exercises contain no thought-provoking content at all, as, e.g., the direction, "In the sentence *Ich habe einen Bruder* substitute for the indefinite article *einen* the negative article *keinen*." (p. 32). As part of their motto the authors have taken "Extreme simplicity; nothing taken for granted." (p. iii). To those who deal daily with high-school children this will seem as serious an error as the opposite extreme. Our pupils do not know all English grammar, but they do know some of it, and most of them are able to think fairly accurately without quite so many props as the authors give. It is impossible to avoid the feeling that this part of the work is based upon a misconception of the stage of development attained by the average high-school pupil. Aside from this serious objection, these sections of the lessons present a great variety of interesting drill exercises which will do much to produce a feeling of security in the use of the language. The omission of all forms of the definite article up to Lesson 9 may promote simplicity, but will prove rather an obstacle than a help in actual practice.

With such an abundance of drill exercises available, it is again difficult to understand why the authors have given over one-fifth of their entire space to English re-translation exercises, consisting for the most part of disconnected sentences. This is really a conservative estimate, based upon actual pages covered, and not taking into account the small type used. To be sure, these need not all be used, but why suggest to teachers such a disproportionate amount of this type of exercise. Perhaps this is one of the evidences of adaptability to "any method of instruction" (p. iv), a concession to the conservative "indirect-method" teachers. The writer is not aware, however, that any grammar, conservative or radical, uses to such an extent this form of exercise, which is subjected to so much unfavorable criticism to-day. It gives the book a distinction which is far from desirable.

The vocabulary is kept within reasonable limits and justifies the authors' claim that they have used repetition abundantly in the lessons. The G-E vocabulary, while containing about 1700 entries, actually represents perhaps not more than 1000-1200 different words, as a great many inflectional forms and compounds are listed, such as *geworden*, *beim*, *angekommen*, etc. So small a vocabulary in so large a book must conduce to a more thorough active mastery than is ordinarily possible.

From the foregoing comments it will be seen that this text is an unusual and rather unsuccessful compromise. The desire to please all sides has rendered necessary the inclusion of much that would have been superfluous in a book with more singleness of purpose. Coupled with the elaboration necessary to attain the "extreme simplicity" striven for, this has produced a book of such length that the authors feel called upon to defend this point in the Preface. It is quite evident that an average high-school class would be obliged to spend the major portion of two years on the work here outlined, even with liberal cuts in the re-translation exercises. If teachers are willing to winnow and sift the heterogeneous material offered them, they can no doubt find what they want and need for instructing their classes, but the prophecy may be ventured that a shortened and unified edition will be called for, even by those with whom the book finds favor.

(B) relies upon the same method of presentation as the foregoing, but shows somewhat more consistency and restraint in the actual handling of the subject-matter. Following the plan of the author's first *German Grammar*, the basic, connected reading, taken bodily from the author's *Vorwärts*, is printed together in the first 119 pages. With this reading material there has been combined, with slight changes, the author's recent *Elements of German*. In the resulting book we have, therefore, the author's third effort to provide a text for beginners. The grammar and drill material has been distributed over 65 lessons, of which each fifth one is indicated as a review. The ordinary arrangement is, a) a proverb, b) a full statement of grammar rules with copious illustrations, c) special vocabulary, d) oral drill, consisting usually of a set of illustrative German sentences followed up by a set of English sentences, with no indications as to what is to be done with either, e) an exercise, consisting of a reference to the pages of "Easy Reading" to be taken up, a grammar question, and German and English sentences, again with no directions for their use. Occasionally questions are used instead of the German sentences.

The Introduction of ten pages deals in a rather better way than usual with questions of pronunciation, orthography, and the like; individual objections cannot be given here. A good map in colors follows the Introduction. Eight songs with music appear between the reading and grammar sections. Following the grammar lessons, 60 pages are occupied with a strong-verb list, paradigms, an additional treatise on pronunciation, word-formation, a simple statement of Grimm's law, a few grammar rules in German, and a brief treatment of phonetics; all, except the first two are, as here presented, of extremely doubtful value to the pupil. Such a combination of teacher's manual and pupil's class book needs a special justification which seems lacking here. The G-E vocabulary contains ca. 1500 different words, although there is a much larger number of entries, for "every form of the reading occurs in the vocabulary." The words are generally very well chosen, and many useful hints on idiomatic phrases are given. A full index provides for use of the book for reference in the later years of the course.

It is extremely unfortunate that the connection between the reading and the grammar lessons is indicated in so inconspicuous a way. If the author, instead of devoting so much time and space to the novelties above mentioned, had been more solicitous with reference to this most vital point, he would have done the teacher a much greater service. Even his original *German Grammar* was better in this regard, for there the page references to the reading stood at the very beginning of the lesson, thus indicating that the reading was to be taken up *first*. In the present book, as stated, the references to the "Easy Reading" are after the formal grammar statements, vocabulary, and oral drill, thus encouraging the old, deductive method of teaching. This serious blemish, which would have been so easy to remedy, cannot be criticized too severely. It will prove a stumbling block to many a young teacher not yet settled in method and practice. The reading matter is decidedly national in character. Although the dialogue form offers a poor ground-work for question and answer, it may be allowed to pass as drill material upon which to base grammar exercises; but even the use made of the beautiful and

exceptionally clear pictures cannot save the language from being stiff and mechanical, almost wooden at times, as, e.g., pages 13-14, 21-2, or 63-4. Even at this sacrifice the author has sometimes, though not often, failed to provide sufficient illustrations of the grammar points in question; e.g., Lesson VI, based on pages 10-11.

This rather severe criticism may be offset by the praise due the formal grammar statements. The author shows a rare understanding of the difficulties an American child meets in his study of German, and uses a simple, straightforward style which is refreshing. Just those things which a teacher has always wished a book *would* treat are to be found here, as, e.g., the statement on the agreement of possessives (p. 182) and the explanation of adjective declension (p. 199). There are also numerous attempts to develop a proper instinct for idiomatic usage, e.g., the use of *all* (p. 228), or *him* and *her* (p. 256). Constant comparisons with English usage are a valuable feature. While the use of such designations as the *fourth* and *fifth classes* of nouns and the *mixed declension* of adjectives seems to the writer unnecessary, that is more or less a matter of personal preference. The frequent warnings against common errors, e.g., (p. 287) against using *bei* for agency, may not be psychologically justifiable, but experience proves their necessity. On page after page even the teacher of long experience can find suggestions for improving and simplifying his explanations of grammar facts.

Unfavorable again must be the judgment on the exercises, which are far too few and too monotonous for a book which, by its material and plan, aims at an inductive presentation with much drill. There is no variety from lesson to lesson, nor within the lesson. We find ourselves obliged to supplement constantly as we use the book in class. Aside from translating English sentences and answering questions, nothing to *do in German* is directly indicated. Even the pictures are not referred to as a most excellent basis for oral or written composition.

The book is excellently gotten up and there are few typographical errors. (p. 147, § 46, a, read IV). The pictures are without doubt superior to those in any text published for beginners, either grammar or reader.

From our experience with (B) in class, as well as from the judgments recorded above, we consider it best suited for the two-year high-school course, where there is not so much time for inductive drill, and where grammar must be explained, rather than developed entirely by use. Even in the short course, however, many progressive teachers will feel sorely the lack of varied and "direct" exercises. The book simply does not, in its execution, live up to the hopes aroused by its plan. In this third attempt the pioneer in this type of work has not progressed very far beyond his first effort. In spite of that fact, there is no doubt that many teachers will be attracted to the book and will find it more usable than most of the texts now available.

With (C) we return to the more conservative lines of presentation. In 47 of the 57 lessons the indicated approach is through formal grammar explanation to the illustrative material. The lessons are of no regular length, running even in the early part of the book from one page to seven pages. Neither is there apparent a definite order within the lesson. Explanations,

reading, illustrative material, exercises are introduced when the author believes the psychological moment has arrived. This takes away much of the mechanical stiffness often resulting from a strictly regular arrangement but its desirability for the ordinary class exercise is somewhat doubtful. German type is not introduced till Lesson 14, and is printed bold-faced up to Lesson 18. Separate vocabularies are used through Lesson 25, after which reference is made to the general vocabularies, except in the case of certain selections in the latter part, where, for some unexplained reason, separate vocabularies are again introduced and the words are not included in the general vocabulary. If the desire is merely to render the reading easy, the grounds are scarcely sufficient to justify this irregularity. The active vocabulary that the student is expected to master in the first 42 lessons (up to the passive voice) is small, only about 800 different words. An Introduction of about 15 pages gives in a very practical and helpful way instruction in pronunciation and orthography. Grammatical tables, including a list of strong verbs and a summary of word-order, occupy 26 pages after the lessons; they offer the usual material. An index to the grammar sections makes the book suitable for reference work.

By far the most striking feature of this book is the author's effort to "change German grammar from enigmatic paradigms to rational principles." Examination bears out the indication of the Foreword that reliance is placed chiefly upon three means for attaining this rationalization of grammar. First, the various case endings are rationalized by calling attention constantly to their relation to the personal pronoun forms. Thus nouns are given in the vocabularies with the pronoun after them, e.g., *das Buch es*, and are to be learned in that way. The originality of this procedure is not in the comparisons themselves, but in the many ingenious devices and the consistency with which they are employed. These should certainly prove very useful. Second, the attempt is made to simplify the various rules for word-order by introducing the principle of the *clamp*. But with a two-word clamp, a subject-verb clamp, a subject-auxiliary clamp, a verb + separable-prefix clamp, a clamp formation of verb + stereotyped object, and a clamp formation of verb + well-nigh prefixable adverbs of place, it is extremely doubtful whether the subject has become in any way simpler. It is certainly open to serious objection and is not likely to appeal to many teachers in its entirety; it might well be used in part for emphasizing certain simple constructions, but is weakened and made bunglesome by trying to give it general application. It is the least desirable of the author's innovations. Much more successful is the third means, the consistent and sensible use of comparison with English. This is here carried to far greater lengths even than in (B), and our thanks are due to the author for his clear, usable statements in this connection. Good examples are § 244 (the passive), § 105 (this one, etc.), and § 38 (vowel change in present).

The claim that the book "presents new difficulties gradually" and that "one thing is learned at a time" is scarcely justified when one considers the fullness of the grammatical material offered. Little or no concession is made to the present-day tendency to eliminate from beginning books all non-essentials.

Since all the material is here presented under the lesson divisions, none being reserved for a separate reference section, the problem of choosing and eliminating must become a serious one for a teacher desiring to lessen the formal grammar work. The other claims with reference to easy progression, as expressed in § 2 of the Foreword, are justified. Points habitually causing students trouble are especially emphasized, as, e.g., the absence of progressive forms in German and the idiomatic uses of *doch*, etc. with the imperative. The contribution of such schematic reviews as, e.g., § 112 is very doubtful; they lack *Übersichtlichkeit*.

The forty stories which form the basic connected reading, as well as the poems introduced, lend themselves readily to the variants desired for later, more involved exercises. The early ones are used over and over with good effect. There is enough national character, both external and spiritual. It seems unfortunate that this connected reading, with its abundant illustrations, is not regularly made the avenue of approach to the grammar. A good example of such a possibility is § 310, which is in itself an excellent sample of basic reading without the usual stiffness and unnaturalness. But it stands after the explanatory grammar section.

As in the grammar sections, so also in the drill exercises the author has been unusually successful in transferring his own teaching method to the printed page. Directions are given in German from Lesson 22 on. Exercises are present in sufficient quantity and variety, becoming weak in spots, e.g., in connection with noun declensions, and at times assuming a lack of self-consciousness on the part of the students which scarcely ever exists; e.g., the *verliebt—verlobt—vermählt* game in § 270.

From the foregoing analysis it ought to be perfectly apparent that (C) is essentially a college text. Its constant appeal to the reasoning powers, its fullness and thoroughness, its order of presentation really take it out of the high-school range. That the author has thought mainly in terms of college work is indicated by the use of the word *student* in the Foreword and by the use of *Herr* and *Fräulein* in the drill exercises. On the other hand, some of the reading material is rather aimed at children than at grown-ups. This somewhat incongruous mixture of type is, as stated in the general remarks above, unfortunate. The unusual opportunities for self-help offered in this text ought to make it very successful in college classes, and it would serve as a splendid basis for extension work or correspondence study. With the exception of a few minor flaws it will answer all ordinary demands for reference. Typographical errors are abundant, even in addition to those corrected on a supplementary sheet. A corrected edition is promised and will probably appear before this review.

(D) makes still fewer concessions than (C) to modern ideas of language instruction. To be sure, the illustrative German sentences precede the formal grammar, but they are stiff, with few exceptions disconnected, uninteresting, and offer little as a real foundation for drill. The connection between them and the drill exercises is consequently exceedingly loose. Such monstrosities as: *Der Lehrer, der heute lehrt, ist der, der das Buch hat*, are matched by such sequences as the following: 12. *Das Wort Lehrer endet auf er und es ist*

männlich; der Dativ der Einzahl hat kein *e*. 13. *Wo bist du?* 14. *Wohin gehst du?* 15. *Ich gehe dahin.* 16. *Woher kommst du?* 17. *Hier, ist der Mann.* 18. *Da ist die Frau.* . . . 26. *Das ist nicht Eisen, es ist Blech.* 27. *Die Köchin macht heute Butter.* 28. *Butter macht sie heute.* 29. *Heute macht sie Butter.* (p. 62) *Die Knaben rauchen Zigaretten nach der Schule* and *Wer die besten Muskeln hat, kann am besten denken* at least connect us with certain features of *American* life! When one realizes that this is a fair sample of what is offered in the German models, one almost becomes discouraged from further investigation of the book. Even the *Lorelei* is divided into three sections, of which the last fails to appear! Space is lacking here for further examples. The national element is almost wholly absent.

Like (C), (D) lays great stress upon the rational treatment of grammar, but uses the means to that end much less happily and successfully. These means are chiefly: 1. Consistent approach through the medium of parallel forms and constructions in English. 2. Consistent and constant reference to historical development of German. The former, while usually pertinent and helpful, is sometimes strained to the breaking point (§ 104), and the second frequently leads the author into the almost inevitable pitfall of imparting a great deal of interesting information quite useless for a beginner (§§ 242, 253). To these two devices the author adds what he calls his "cumulative" method, which he applies both to pronunciation and grammar. Instead of having an Introduction dealing with pronunciation in the stereotyped way, there is a short section devoted to this at the beginning of each of the 44 chapters. While this treatment is good and useful in the main, there are some misstatements, and the matter becomes somewhat attenuated near the close, having very little to do with pronunciation (§§ 371, 399, 410.) In the same way there is given a section on gender in each chapter, and as was again almost inevitable, a great deal too much is offered in the way of rules for determining gender. Wiser is the treatment of idioms and the plurals of nouns, for instance, which are not carried through all the lessons. The "cumulative" idea is further seen in the frequent section references for review in the later lessons. No subject is treated fully in any one chapter, but is usually taken up in small divisions throughout several chapters, not always consecutive. This plan is very good when used with restraint, but easily leads to splitting each chapter up into too many fragments. Unfortunately the author has not avoided this danger, and in Chap. 7 we have, e.g., present of verbs with umlaut; principal parts of *haben*; declension of personal pronouns; prepositions with genitive; order of subordinate clauses; feminine suffix *-in*; gender of nouns in *-ig*, etc. This is the usual thing; and this fragmentary presentation does not seem, moreover, to have a definite plan or order in all cases. Chapter headings or titles are lacking. A further disadvantage is that important topics do not receive special and evident emphasis. For instance (§ 133), the weak declension of adjectives receives somewhat casual mention along with numerals and the gender of flowers, and in § 141 *ward* and *wurde* are given equal illustration and emphasis.

Aside from the faults arising from the author's execution of the cumulative plan, the presentation of grammar is open to many individual objections.

Why does the author find it desirable further to clutter up an already too varied grammatical nomenclature with such terms as *old* and *new* (for strong and weak) verbs; *short* and *long* subjunctives (called by Prokosch, Roehm and others I and II)? Space is wasted on irregularities of little consequence to beginners (§ 268). There is too much tendency to reduce facts to general principles which have, unfortunately, many exceptions in practice, or which are of doubtful validity (§§ 32, 46, 86, 95, 289, 376). In § 29 the so-called "discontinued" forms of the present of *haben* are printed prominently beside the correct forms; another example of too much explanation of doubtful pedagogical soundness.

Reviews are encouraged by sets of questions in English at the close of every six or eight chapters. Drill work consists chiefly of sets of English sentences; a limited number of mutation and blank-filling exercises; questions on forms; German questions to be answered. While not numerous, these exercises suggest lines on which the teacher can enlarge. German directions are gradually introduced. There is no reference list of strong verbs. No tables of declension and conjugation are given in convenient form for review, such as many teachers desire to have. A few good pictures poorly reproduced are scattered through the book. Special vocabularies are given with each chapter. The general G-E vocabulary contains about 2000 words; numerous section references encourage the student to look up the grammatical facts concerning form, pronunciation, etc. The book is very free from typographical errors.

(D) is distinctly a college type of book in spite of the statement on the title-page. Nevertheless, as in (C), some of the German illustrative material is rather suited to the child mind. In spite of the distinctive features its author claims for it, it does not become easily apparent how the text can justify its appearance alongside of the many excellent books of its type already on the market.

J. D. DEIHL.

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Phonetic French Reader. Phonetic transcription of short stories for oral French, by Anna Woods Ballard, and Edmund Tilly. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1916. xx + 39 pp. 60 cents.

The Ballard-Tilly *Phonetic French Reader*, which aims to inculcate an accurate scientific knowledge of the Sounds of French, by means of specimens of French in the form of brief anecdotes transcribed phonetically, makes use of the system of transcription, now so widely used, of the International Phonetic Association. The very useful practical Introduction contained in the first twenty pages, summarizes the essential character of vowels and consonants, linking and syllabication. One key-word, in which the particular sound exemplified occurs is given to illustrate each of the thirty-six sounds that may be considered as making up the complement of sounds ordinarily

heard in standard French. The symbol for what **h** is supposed to represent is lacking, the inference being that non-existence of any such sound. It may be questioned whether there be a slightly aspirated **h** in the ten words: *hardi, hasard, héro, haine, hideux, haut, haute, hauteur, honteuse, housse*, given, at all events, by Passy in the vocabulary to his *French Phonetic Reader*, London, 1914, a little book quite similar to the Ballard-Tilly reader, and having an advantage pedagogically over it in being provided with a phonetic vocabulary, in itself always quite an asset for the study of pronunciation. In the list of phonetic symbols entitled "Sounds and Words" (page X), but *one* example for each sound is given. That is hardly as informing as similar tables giving *two* examples, divided to illustrate both quantity and quality distinctions of vowels and to show any possible variation in sound of initial, medial and final consonants.

Viotor's tabulation of the consonants and vowels (page IX), depicting the unvoiced consonants in black type, the voiced in red, and the nasals in green, is quite effective. Not to be finicky, however, your reviewer agrees with Sweet who says,¹ when commenting on Jespersen's idiosyncrasy of reversing what seems to be the normal order (that is from left to right, precisely as in putting down in writing the spoken word), of portraying the organs of speech and of tabulating the sounds: "It is highly desirable to adopt a uniform standard order, for experience shows that those who have accustomed themselves to the one find it difficult to think in the other." Nevertheless, the Germans Viotor and Sievers, and modern English writers Soames, Jones, Rippman, Noël, Armfield, and writers on French phonetics like Bascan and Dumville, reverse the order of Bell and Sweet. It may be contended that the order in which the organs and related consonants come is a mere detail, and that it is immaterial whether they appear from left to right or from right to left. Experience in teaching, however, would indicate such a contention is not tenable and is absolutely wrong pedagogically. The American writers on phonetics Grandgent, Hempl and Pierce, by arranging all their diagrams with a view of illustrating throughout from left to right all the linguistic phenomena explained have made no mistake in following such worthy predecessors as Bell and Sweet.

As regards quickness of utterance, the sixty-three short specimens of pronunciation represent: 1-10, very slow pronunciation with rare omission of *e* mute; 11-22, slow and careful utterance with *e* mute sometimes omitted; 21-40, medium speed with a few abbreviations of vowels and a less number of linkings; 21-63, fairly rapid pronunciation. Stress is indicated in the usual way by the sign (') before the accented syllable. Words that go together are so indicated by a slur (—) joining them. The *l facultatif*, about which the novice asks so many questions, is printed in italics. A small round *o* beneath a letter indicates devocalization. Breath groups are marked off by (||), and quantity is denoted by two dots (:) whether long or half long. It would seem conformable with the principle involved on the use of phonetic symbols and signs to denote half quantity by *one* dot, as is not infrequently done in

¹*The Sounds of English*, (page 135); Oxford, England. 1898

some phonetic texts, rather than by two, but this is a mere detail. Both in minutiae and in general execution, the selections are transcribed with extreme care and precision. One may disagree again and again as regards the quality of the vowel in *ces, les, mes, des, mais, maison*, etc.; one may wonder why the *eu* in *déjeuner* (page 8, No. 20, line 5) appears with the closed sound of *eu*, and with the open sound (page 23, No. 52, line 12); one may question the quality of the *a* in *climat* (page 9, No. 23, line 4) and in many like words; one may question the non-linking of the *t* in the expression: *C'est parfaitement exact* (page 3, No. 7, line 11), and be thoroughly at a loss to determine why the *n* of nasals is sometimes linked with the vowel in the following word and sometimes not (cf=page 8, No. 20, the title:): *l'Américain en Angleterre*; whatever surprises may come to the mind of the industrious skeptic, he will not fail to find the most convincing authority for the usage in question, which represents with phonetic accuracy devised with rare skill the normal pronunciation of the educated Frenchman of culture. Not only is the linking of consonant with vowel shown, but words that go together, where one ends in a vowel and the next begins with a vowel, is shown with exemplary precision, hardly marring esthetically the attractive appearance of the phonetic page. These accurately transcribed brief selections fill in an effective manner precisely the need they are intended to meet, and are, moreover, a welcome addition to the scanty material of the kind that has up to the present time appeared in this country.

JAMES GEDDES, JR.

Boston University.

Advanced French Composition, by Raymond T. Hill and Horatio E. Smith. Henry Holt, 1916. vi + 187 pp. \$1.00

French Composition, by Moritz Levi. Henry Holt, 1916. vi + 115 pp. 75 cents.

These two books are alike externally in that both are based on French originals which are set before the student as a basis for his work; both have questionnaires for oral work, and both have double vocabularies. The French texts for the first named have been selected from various well-known reviews and journals, while Professor Levi's are no doubt largely of his own composition. They are unlike in all essentials as will appear hereafter.

I

The Hill-Smith book is for college classes, evidently, since both the topics discussed (e.g. Maeterlinck: *Marie-Madgdeleine*; *The Interest in Lectures in France*) and the difficulty of the passages would render it of small use in most high school classes. In the college, on the other hand, much is to be said in favor of using such material for composition instead of the "travelogues," numerous progeny of "*le Petit Parisien*" and delightful substitutes for disconnected sentences, which a "practical" pedagogy has called forth in abundance. For this book is intended to teach French literature and ideas, as well as composition, and the English texts, wherever examined, endeavor to

supply the class with much that is needed to introduce and clarify to the students at this stage the topics discussed in the French originals, in themselves somewhat fragmentary. The first part deals with modern authors (Bordeaux, Rolland, Donnay, etc.) and the theater (including selections on the *Arènes de Lutèce* and of course one on the *Cinéma*); the second part deals with phases of French activity, as for example, *The Gardens of Versailles*, *Morocco and the Railway*, and is literary in tone though non-literary in matter.

With this phase of the book's purpose in mind one may question the wisdom of choosing *le Ménage de Molière* as representative of Donnay, and of having the student translate (of Donnay): "in some respects he resembles Shakespeare." Similarly it is not well to have him accept for Zola the dictum of Vogüé that he took account "merely of facts and actions." In general, however, the originals are well chosen. They are interesting and to the point, and are calculated to stimulate the student's curiosity, while the English versions, as indicated above, supplement them well with regard to their content.

There is one aspect of these English versions that quite puzzles the reviewer, for it is too evident not to be intentional: for the most part they resemble the French originals so little that one sometimes wonders why the authors printed the originals at all. This is notably true of numbers 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, of the eight selections which the reviewer has read carefully for comparison. The English text with certain phrases and words in footnotes, together with the vocabulary, would have furnished all the apparatus provided in the present arrangement of these selections. The possibility of the student arriving at a pretty good translation by making a mosaic from his French text is a faint one. Perhaps it was the author's intention to avoid this well-known abuse of the double text system, but, in the reviewer's judgment, he has avoided it too completely.

The phrasing of the English text is not always happy. Compare "then the man dies, and Nicole marries a man whom she has long loved, and has just made a vow that she will do her best to make her mother happy, when she has to follow her husband to Russia, where business compels him to live" (p. 15) and "with a wonderful care he reveals. . ." (p. 7), and "you find there a great number of foreigners and a multitude of Frenchmen of an extreme type, often even too refined" (p. 19) and "this refuge" (p. 85) in speaking of the Hospice of Saint Bernard. The proof reading is well done, though the form "Mme." in the English text (p. 13) would lead the student astray, as the correct French writing does not appear in the French text before p. 58. An incomplete examination of the vocabulary yielded a few examples of omission: confine (p. 3), support (p. 5), exert (p. 9), sufficiently (p. 19, vocabulary gives *suffisamment*), mastery (p. 19). The corresponding French texts, though rather carefully read, did not suggest satisfactory equivalents for these words.

It is evident that the book is the expression of an idea and an excellent one, and as such merits real consideration on the part of teachers of mature classes in composition. Whether any of the characteristics pointed out above are real weaknesses only a class room test under proper conditions will show.

II

Professor Levi's book is a "travelogue," adapted for less advanced classes, and designed to acquaint the pupil with a considerable number of current idioms and words useful especially to the traveler, as well as to introduce a good deal of information that may be helpful to the foreigner in Paris. The plan is, of course, no new one: Professor Levi, however, gives evidence of sobriety in avoiding the long descriptions of public monuments in Paris which often make similar works tiresome, and has so ordered the material that it is possible to get into a book of these dimensions, as to make a work that has intrinsic interest and will give the teacher who knows Paris (for we get only to Paris) ample occasion to use his wall map and plunge more deeply with his class into the wonderful city.

The French material is simple and sprightly, and the English texts,—while satisfactory as English, are ingeniously built up on the French original so as to utilize, first and last, about all the vocabulary and idiomatic expressions that the latter contains. To get an idea of the nature and abundance of the idiomatic expressions, the reader may glance at the following jotted down from the first fifteen pages: *se décider à, faire faire, faire enregistrer, avoir la chance de, faire la connaissance de, demander q'q'chose à q'q'un, avoir besoin de, il faut with infin., se contenter de, avoir l'intention de, penser à, aussitôt arrivés, laisser à désirer, d'avance.*

The book may be commended to teachers in high school (third to fourth semesters), and Junior Colleges (second and third semesters), who consider translation from English a better basis for study of grammar and idiom than composition in French.

Alongside this favorable judgment it is only fair to place one or two less approving general comments, and as many observations on details.

The English text is over commented; often the student has but to glance at the opposite page to get an expression that is carefully entered in a note; and sometimes repeated in subsequent pages, always with its accompanying note. Examples are *se décider à* (pp. 3, 17, 23, 75), omission of "of" in dates (p. 3, twice in note; cf. p. 2, l. 6), *went down to* (p. 9 l. 7) translated in note by *descendre à* when the phrase is found in l. 10 of the opposite page. Such cases are numerous, too numerous.

Since the author is master of the text, and thus able to make it illustrate any grammatical construction or emphasize any difficulties that Americans encounter in the elementary stages of French, it seems unfortunate that the book does not provide more ample occasion for acquiring facility in the use and position of personal pronoun objects, and in certain fundamental uses of the subjunctive. A rather careful reading of the book has yielded only three examples of the subjunctive. One of these (p. 3) is disguised by the form, the other two (pp. 41, 63) are supplied in notes.

The reviewer is unfamiliar with the expression "filleted herring" for *filet de hareng* (p. 49), and believes that most American students would be surprised at the use of "stalls" for orchestra seats (p. 63). Similarly he thinks a negative must have got lost in the sentence: "In France the vegetables are usually eaten with the meat courses," despite *déjeuner à la fourchette* in a note

(p. 49), and is somewhat puzzled by the use of "breakfast" (p. 55) when "lunch" is demanded for clearness. These small observations on the English idiom indicate with what success Professor Levi has usually avoided one of the well-known difficulties in books of this type.

One last remark: the reviewer was pleased at Professor Levi's young men stopping in New York to buy *Les Dieux ont soif* as well as cork-tipped cigarettes, and astonished to find them later purchasing in Paris "le roman nouveau (see p. 43, note 2) d'Anatole France, *le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard*."

The vocabularies, though too full, seem accurate—the adverb "pretty" is the only omission the reviewer has noted—and the proof reading has been carefully done.

A. COLEMAN.

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A Spanish Reader with Questions and Vocabulary, by Erwin W. Roessler and Alfred Remy. American Book Company, 1916. 248 pp. 58 cents.

This attractive and practical little book by two members of the Faculty of the High School of Commerce in New York fulfills admirably the avowed desire of its authors for "a textbook that combines simplicity with variety." Its general character may be inferred from a further quotation from the preface. "To make it available for use almost at the very beginning of the Spanish course, only the present tense has been employed in the first twenty-three selections and difficult constructions have been consistently avoided. With one or two exceptions, many changes have been made in the selections taken from Spanish authors in order to adapt them to the needs of the beginner. The greater part of the reading material, however, is either original or adapted from other languages."

This method has very practical and obvious advantages for students of grammar or high school age. This reader can be put almost at once into their hands, its simplicity should make for rapid progress, and there is no necessity for the often cumbersome and little consulted machinery of notes.

The authors have succeeded to a remarkable degree in realizing the ideal which they set before them. There is great simplicity and great variety in their little book. The fifty-six prose selections include an agreeable alternation of entertainment and instruction in the anecdotes, short stories, and little essays on Mexico, Cuba, Chile, Argentina, the Panama Canal, etc.

Some unusual and interesting features of this reader are, the several collections of proverbs and riddles, a page of theatre announcements in Madrid, the advertisement of a new opera; and, in addition to the usual poetry, in this case, half a dozen of Iriarte's fables, a couple of Spanish folk songs with music, and the national hymns of Spain, Mexico, and Guatemala.

Typographically, the book is a delight. Clear print, attractive illustrations and convenient size, add to its charm.

M. G. CUSHING.

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